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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 008257

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STATE PASS TO EAP/CM
STATE PASS TO EAP/FO MCGANN
STATE PASS TO EAP/RSP ORTIZ
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TAGS: PREL PTER IMO EFIS ETTW KTIA ASEC CH

SUBJECT: EAP SENIOR ADVISOR MCGANN DISCUSSES STRAITS OF MALACCA SECURITY WITH MFA

Classified By: Political External Unit Chief Edgard Kagan. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: On April 28 EAP Senior Advisor Steven McGann briefed MFA Asian Affairs Department Counselor Guo Yan on the 2005 Jakarta International Maritime Organization (IMO) meeting and the February 2006 Alameda &Enhancing the Safe Use of the Strait of Malacca Conference.⁸ McGann explained that the Alameda Conference participants are finalizing a matrix of available assistance that user states can provide to littoral states and that he would provide the matrix to the IMO Secretary General in mid-May. Noting that U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) yearly &International Military Operations and Law Conference⁸ in Bangkok July 17-19 would be a good opportunity for littoral and user states to discuss Malacca Straits security, McGann invited the PRC to send an expert to the conference. Beijing believes the littoral states must play a leading role in Malacca Straits security. The PRC will study the Alameda report and the matrix of available assistance and consider the invitation to attend the Bangkok conference. Guo requested that the United States and China remain in close communication on this issue. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) Visiting EAP Senior Advisor for Maritime Security Steven McGann, accompanied by Emboffs, met April 28 with MFA Asian Affairs Department Counselor Guo Yan. McGann lead off by relating to Guo the results of discussions on Malacca Straits security issues during the September 2005 IMO-sponsored Jakarta meeting on the Straits of Malacca and February 2006 Alameda &Enhancing the Safe Use of the Strait of Malacca Conference.⁸ Two important decisions emerged from the Jakarta IMO conference, according to McGann. First, littoral states must take a leadership role in Malacca Straits, security. Second, user states, affirmed the sovereignty and territoriality of the littoral states while offering to assist the littoral states on security matters. In a subsequent February 2006 conference convened by the United States in Alameda, California, Malacca Straits user states drafted a conceptual framework for offering security assistance to the littoral states. The framework contains four elements: burden sharing, interoperability, sustainability and prevention of redundancy. The Alameda participants pledged to move forward in an open, transparent manner so that littoral states know what is available in

terms of assistance. McGann told Guo that as a key Malacca user state, China should be part of process and regretted that China could not attend the Alameda conference. In accordance with China's request, the United States would keep China informed on progress on this issue and McGann provided Guo a copy of the Alameda report.

¶13. (C) McGann then explained that the Alameda participants are finalizing a matrix of available assistance that he would provide to the IMO Secretary General in mid-May. The matrix is intended to provide descriptive details of available assistance that user states can offer to the littoral states and is not meant to be prescriptive. McGann pledged that he would also provide the MFA a copy of the matrix to ensure that China is included in the post-Alameda user state discussions.

¶14. (C) Guo stated that the PRC is also very concerned about Malacca Straits, security, as it is one of the world's most vital sea lanes. The Malacca Straits is crucial not only to world economic development but also to regional stability. The PRC position is that the littoral states, in accordance with the United Nations Charter and international law, should guarantee security of the Malacca Strait. The littoral states must play a leading role in Malacca Strait security, Guo emphasized. The littoral states also hope that user states can provide capacity building and technical assistance. Dialogue between user states and littoral states can help guarantee the Malacca Straits, security. Since a large portion of China's oil imports and commercial trade passes through the Malacca Straits, China would also like to discuss with the United States strengthening security in the Malacca Straits. Guo asked whether the matrix of available assistance would be submitted at September IMO meeting in

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Kuala Lumpur.

¶15. (C) Stating that the matrix should be an important part of the September IMO meeting, McGann noted that littoral states expressed interest in assistance from user states during 2005 Jakarta meeting. The matrix contains information on capacity building, information sharing, training exercises, counterterrorism and developing partnerships with the private sector. McGann reiterated that he would visit London in mid-May to discuss the matrix with the IMO Secretary General.

¶16. (C) McGann informed Guo that since the IMO would not be able to organize an expert-level meeting between littoral and users states prior to the Kuala Lumpur meeting the United States is looking to utilize an already scheduled U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) yearly &International Military Operations and Law Conference⁸ in Bangkok July 17-19 to discuss Malacca Straits security issues. McGann said July 18 would be devoted solely to discussing maritime issues and hoped that the PRC would send a delegate who could address Malacca Straits, security issues. McGann told Guo that China had attended previous PACOM &International Military Operations and Law Conferences⁸ and invited the PRC to attend the Bangkok conference. Noting that the conference would be structured in an academic fashion, he also invited the PRC to make a presentation at the conference. In response to Guo's query about the United State's expectation for the meeting, McGann stated that it would allow for both a formal and informal exchange of views among littoral and user states and would provide a basis for a successful IMO meeting in Kuala Lumpur in September.

¶17. (C) Guo thanked McGann for the invitation to the July conference. She stated that the PRC would carefully study the Alameda Report and the matrix of available assistance. Guo suggested that the United States seek out and listen to the comments of the littoral states on the matrix. She reaffirmed the PRC's interest in Malacca Straits, security and requested that the United States remain in close

communication with the PRC on this issue.

¶8. (U) EAP Senior Advisor McGann cleared this cable.
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